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MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES.

Baltimore, January, 1901.

*DAS WORT SIE SOLLEN LASSEN
STAHN UND KEIN DANCK
DAZU HABEN.*

FOR more than three centuries and a half Luther's *Ein feste burg ist unser Gott* has been the favorite hymn of Protestantism wherever German is spoken; it has been discussed by commentators, translated into numerous languages, and admired by lovers of poetry the world over; and until recently no one ever suggested that any part of it was in its wording obscure or ambiguous, or at variance with common usage. On the contrary, it was universally considered a model of clear, forcible and, in the best sense, popular diction; as Cyriakus Spangenberg, in the preface to his *Cithara Lutheri* (1569), said of Luther's hymns generally:

"Da ist nichts gezwungenes, nichts genöthigtes und eingeflicktes, nichts verdorbenes. Die Reimen sind leicht und gut, die Wort artlich und auserlesen, die Meinung klar und verständlich," etc.

It was in the year of the Luther jubilee, 1883, that new interpretations, especially of the first two lines in the fourth stanza, were first brought forward. Carl Schultz, in the *Nationalzeitung*, August 5, took "das wort" to mean "der Logos Jesus Christus;" but Theodor Maurer (*ibid.*, October 5), effectively defended the traditional interpretation 'the Gospel.' E. Krey (*Neue Stettiner Zeitung*, November 5), on the other hand, understood both "das wort" and "ein wörtlin" in the last line of the preceding stanza ("ein wörtlin kan yhn fellen") to refer to a particular passage of Scripture, namely, St. John, xvi, 8-11. The improbability of such an obscure allusion has been pointed out by Georg Runze, *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 41 (1898), p. 446 f.; but this same scholar offers a far more extraordinary theory. He contends (*ibid.*, p. 412 ff.) that "das wort" cannot be the object of "lassen stahn" because the personal verb "sollen" does not precede the subject "sie," though Luther, who scanned (so Runze says) "Nehmén sié den leib," could

equally well have written "Das wórt sollén sie lássen stáhn (sic!); and he proposes, in all seriousness, to take "das wort" as in apposition with "ein wörtlin," to put a colon after "wort," and to read:

ein wörtlin kan yhn fellen,—

(namely) Das wort: "Sie sollen lassen stahn und kein danck dazu haben."

It is needless to comment upon the fatal defects of this theory; the worthlessness of the inference drawn from the word-order; the monstrousness of the scanning and of the proposed *enjambement*; the enigmatical nature of the alleged "word," which contains a transitive verb without an object and is, according to the context, obviously addressed, not to Satan at all, but to the human adversaries of Lutheranism; and finally, the resulting incoherence of the last stanza. Runze is aware (p. 422) that Luther often enough sacrificed word-order to rhythm: cf. "Eyn neues lied wir heben an,"—"Auf ihn mein herz soll lassen sich," etc.; and he admits that he himself is not fully convinced of the correctness of his conclusions; but he declares that his "psychische Intuition," and his "kritisches Gesamtgefühl" (p. 451) favor his interpretation. That is doubtless the root of his trouble; to appreciate songs written for the people by a man of the people, one needs nothing more than a healthy *Sprachgefühl*. To the popular mind the line "ein wörtlin kan yhn fellen" has always been perfectly clear and complete: "a single word (from the Lord) suffices to overthrow him." The same is true of the first line in the fourth stanza: "das wort," in this connection, is readily understood to be *das Wort Gottes*, the gospel as the foundation of the Lutheran doctrine.

It is the second line of the fourth stanza, however, that has been most frequently discussed and most variously interpreted. The first expression of dissent from the common view as to the meaning of "danck" came from Theodor Bach (*Nationalzeitung*, Aug. 3, 1883), who, adopting a suggestion made privately a number of years before by the theologian Oskar Jaenicke, held that *danck* was here used in its original sense of "cogitatio." But while

Jaenicke took the line to mean that "they (the adversaries of the Evangelical doctrine) were not even to think of assailing the gospel," Bach understood it to be directed, more specifically, against "menschliche Gedankenzuthat zum Gotteswort." His arguments were refuted by Carl Schultz and Dr. Zweglinger (both in the *Nationalzeitung*, August 5, 1883), and by Theodor Maurer (*ibid.*, October 5), all of whom adduced, besides, new evidence in favor of the traditional interpretation. It was a matter of surprise, therefore, that Heyne in his *Wörterbuch* I (1890), col. 540, quoted our passage as an illustration of the use of *danck* in the sense of 'inclination, intention, volition.' According to Dietz, *Luther-Wörterbuch* I, 394 f., this use of the word is restricted in Luther's works to the set phrases *ohn danck* (*ohn yhren danck* = against their inclination) and *zu danck*; outside of these stereotyped locutions, which are relics of an earlier usage, Luther never employs the singular *danck* in any other sense than that of 'thanks.' In this primarily abstract sense the word could of course not be pluralized; the plural form (usually not, as in MHG., *denke*, but weak: *dancken*) thus remained available, without danger of ambiguity, for the expression of its primitive meaning 'thoughts,' and Luther so uses it occasionally, in place of the derivative *gedanken*. It is apparent that its occurrence in this sense does not, in itself, warrant any inferences as to the singular, the conditions being essentially different. The verb *dencken*, to be sure, sometimes has in Luther's language the force of 'wishing,' 'intending;' but in all such cases Luther construes it with the preposition *nach* ('etlich die nicht darnach denken, kriegen das haus voll kinder' Dietz I, 423), while he ordinarily uses *an*, *über*, *von*, just as we do now. Heyne, however, in paraphrasing "danck dazu haben" by "es gern thun wollen," connects "danck" with "dazu,"—a construction which is without a parallel in Luther's works or anywhere else.

Apart from these linguistic considerations, the meaning which Heyne's interpretation of "danck" gives to the line "und (sie sollen) kein danck dazu haben" ("and they shall not do it willingly") is in itself unsatisfactory:

whether we take the "shall" as expressing a demand (or command) or as referring to a divine decree, it is not credible that Luther should have either wished or predicted that his enemies would be unwilling ever to leave his doctrine in peace. For evidence on this point we should turn to his pamphlet *Von heimlichen und gestolen briefen* (1529), written in reply to an attack from Duke George of Saxony during the same controversy and amid the same threatening situation which, as now seems certain (cf. H. Biltz, *Herrigs Archiv* lxxv, p. 45 ff.), gave rise to our hymn. There we find various pertinent passages, of which the following (Erlangen edition xxxi, pp. 22 and 28) are particularly to the point:

"Endlich ist noch mein unterthänige Bitte an Herzog Georgen und allen seinen Anhang, sie wollten einmal aufhören, und unsere Lehre mit Frieden lassen . . . Begehren wir doch nicht mehr, denn Friede und stille zu sein . . ."

And in the prayer at the end:

"Lass der Gottlosen Bosheit ein Ende werden . . . Wollen sie nicht aufhören, so schaffe, dass sie müssen aufhören mit ihrem Wüthen und Verfolgen, und bestätige unser Lehre und Thun . . . Ich weiss, dass du mich vertheidigen wirst, und unser Lehre beschirmen, und sollten die Tyrannen bersten und toll werden."

A peculiar suggestion came, in 1893, from R. Sprenger (*Zeitschrift für den deutschen Unterricht*, vii, 683 f.), who wanted to take "danck" in the sense of 'Turnierdank, Siegespreis.' The incongruity of this view was pointed out by R. Hildebrand (*ibid.* vii, 787 f.) who had already in the *DWb.* iv (1878), 1, 1942 declared himself in favor of the common interpretation of our line: "wir danken ihnen gar nicht dafür," adding, however, that in this case the meaning 'thanks' had usurped the place of the meaning 'intention, will.' But there does not appear to be any reason for assuming such a substitution. From the time of our earliest records, 'thanks' was the regular meaning of the word; the only exceptions from this rule are, in OHG., the adverbial genitive *thankes* = 'voluntarily,' and in MHG. a few scattered cases of the use of *danc* in the sense of 'thought,' 'inclination,' 'intention,' besides certain fixed prepositional phrases like *âne danc* (Luther's *ohn danck*); the presumption as to "danck" in our passage is

therefore strongly in favor of 'thanks,' and this meaning, moreover, fits the context to perfection. Hildebrand had in mind the fact that the statement "they shall not even receive thanks for it" implies that "they *must* do it, *willingly or unwillingly*;" but his theory as to the antecedents of the phrase would, like Heyne's view, remove this very essential alternative and substitute the certainty, nay, the necessity (!) of unwillingness. It is sufficient, however, that he agrees to the common interpretation of our line as it stands; a fact which was overlooked by Karl Scheffler, who, in the *Zeitschrift des allgemeinen deutschen Sprachvereins* viii (1893), col. 33 ff., thought it necessary to defend the traditional view (with the modification proposed by him: *danck = Lohn*) against both Heyne and Hildebrand.

After Scheffler's article the controversy rested until quite recently, when Paul Pietsch, in the first issue of Kluge's *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, p. 26 ff., made an attempt to revive the earliest of the dissenting interpretations, that of Oskar Jænicke (*danck* = 'thought'). It would not be worth while to discuss this view again, if it were not now advocated by so prominent a scholar as the editor-in-chief of the new standard edition of Luther's works. Pietsch, it seems, was converted to this view long ago by Fedor Bech, who called his attention to certain parallel passages (cf. Pietsch, p. 27) bearing, as he thought, upon the line under discussion. Let us see what they are and what evidence they furnish.

1. "das ich des habe deheinen danc," Ulrich von Eschenbach's *Alexander*, 6480, and similarly 22680. Bech might also have mentioned *Wigalois* 6466 and Burcard Waldis, *Esopus*, I, 66, 26. These are the only instances recorded in our dictionaries of the use of *danc haben* with the genitive in the sense of 'to think of,' 'to imagine, suppose,' over against the very common occurrence of the phrase, from the OHG. period till long after Luther, as meaning 'to receive thanks, recognition, for' (cf. Luther's poem *Fraw Musica*, line 32: "des [for its song] mus sie [the nightingale] haben jmer danck," and many similar passages).

Bech's quotations, therefore, only emphasize the exceptional nature of such cases.

2. "sine denke da zu legen = *seine Gedanken darauf richten, Leben der hl. Elisabeth*, 4458. This is intended to show the use of *dazu* in connection with *dank*; but "da zu" here modifies "legen," not "denke," and is due solely to the use of this verb.

3. "dar hadden des koninges rād danken tō," Magdeburger Schöffenchronik, 301, 18; explained in the glossary as meaning "dabei hatten des Königs Räte Gedanken, waren misstrauisch." I am not able to verify this passage, and therefore cannot say whether "danken" is there construed with "tō," or whether, as the translation seems to imply, "dar tō" is simply an adverb.

Pietsch realized that his theory needed the support of "a Luther passage in which the phrase (*kein danck dazu haben*) was used in exactly the same sense as in the verse in question." Such a passage, he thinks, he has found in the pamphlet above referred to, where on p. 17 Luther says:

"Nu soll mir Herzog George die Freiheit lassen, dass ich ihn heimlich (that is, privately) urtheile, mit Gedanken, Schriften, Reden, wie ichs für Gott weiss zu verantworten, und solls keinen Dank dazu haben; grobelt er aber darnach hinter meinem Wissen und Willen, und lässt mirs abstehlen, und findet alsdenn, das ihn verdrusst, so hab ers ihm, und ein gut Jahr dazu," etc.

Pietsch declares that "keinen dank dazu haben" and "grobelt er" are antithetic; that the first-mentioned phrase, therefore, must express the opposite of *grobeln*, and that Luther must have meant to say:

"und er soll darauf keinen Gedanken verwenden; thut er das letztere aber, indem er hinter meinem Rücken ihnen nachspürt," etc.

Consequently, he argues, we may consider it as *gesichert* that the two lines in our hymn mean:

"Das Wort sollen sie stehen lassen und kein darauf gerichtetes Denken haben, d.h. sie sollen es weder äusserlich noch auch nur innerlich mit ihren Gedanken antasten."

To all appearances Pietsch fails to perceive that his interpretation would make Luther guilty of a flagrant inconsistency. It is hardly credible that Luther should have uttered such a sentiment at or about the very time when he

was writing a pamphlet in defence of freedom of thought and even of speech in private intercourse, a pamphlet in which he reminds his adversary that "Gedanken sind zollfrei," and denounces him for his "Moabitic conceit and arrogance," in forbidding others to think or privately say or write of him anything he did not approve; still less can we believe that he should have stultified himself by expressing such a sentiment in that very pamphlet, of all places—nay, in the same breath with a declaration to the effect that he considers himself responsible for his thoughts to God alone.

An examination of Pietsch's argument reveals several fundamental errors. In the first place there is no reason whatever for assuming that "grobelt er" is in antithesis with that particular phrase "keinen danck dazu haben;" the passage, as a whole, falls logically as well as syntactically into two parts, the point of division being marked by the semicolon after "haben" (Erl. ed.), or rather, in the original text as quoted by Pietsch, by the capital G of "Grobelt;" the *aber* of the second part, therefore, indicates an antithesis between the two parts as units, more particularly between the leading ideas in them, that is, the "Freiheit lassen," and the "grobeln" and "abstehlen;" and this antithesis is perfectly obvious, for such acts as are denoted by the last-mentioned verbs could only serve (and had already served) the purpose of interfering with the *Freiheit* referred to.

Furthermore, in treating *nachspüren* and *Gedanken verwenden auf* as synonymous, Pietsch simply begs the question. In the pamphlet from which the passage is taken, the words *grobeln* and *ergrobeln* occur each four times, and the situation there discussed leaves no doubt as to their meaning. Duke George had pried into Luther's private correspondence by securing, in an underhanded manner, a copy of a letter in which Luther had severely criticized him, and by using every means in his power to secure the original also; and that is what the *grobeln* in the pamphlet invariably refers to: "grobelt, sucht und fodert die Handschrift," p. 10; "nach frembden Briefen grobelen." p. 16; "ergrobelen und erfahren," "heimliche Briefe und Reed ergrobelen," p. 18; "auf dass er nicht abermal Diebe ausschicken musse, die solch mein

Gebet heimlich ergrobelen und stehlen," p. 25; etc. This meaning of *grobeln*, which prevailed as late as the seventeenth century (cf. Henisch, as quoted by Heyne, *Wb.* I, 1260: "grübelen, nachforschen, erkundigen,") has in it a distinct suggestion of the primitive sense of "digging, grubbing," as is also evidenced by the use of the preposition *nach* and (in other places) *in*, and by the frequent juxtaposition of *grobeln* and *suchen*; it stands midway between the original meaning and the modern one of "pondering, brooding" as restricted to mental activity; the latter would be wholly out of place in our passage and everywhere else in the pamphlet. Pietsch's conclusion as to the force of "keinen danck dazu haben," would, therefore, be unwarranted, even if this phrase were in antithesis with "grobelt er."

The *s* appended to *soll* is another obstacle in Pietsch's way. He admits that it can only be the genitive *es* dependent upon "danck;" but according to his theory the thing thought of is already indicated by "dazu." "However, such an *überflüssiges s*," he says, "is not uncommon with Luther; the most similar case is: 'das yhrs solchs bitten mit aller zuversicht thutt;' compare also 'Du sollsts mirs thun.'" As a matter of fact, the first of these two quotations shows the common phenomenon of anticipation of the object by means of *es*: *dass ihr es, dieses Beten* (the aforesaid praying), *mit aller Zuversicht thut*; the words "solchs bitten," are, in effect, merely explanatory of *es*, and can be omitted entirely.

The other quotation is an instance of simple pleonasm, in the repetition of the syncopated enclitic *es*; Luther expressly defends this usage, adding, however, that without syncope the phrase would be a "barbarus Germanismus" ("undeutsches Deutsch," as it has been aptly rendered).

It is obvious that neither of these two passages is at all analogous, in the use of *es*, to "solls keinen danck dazu haben." The other cases of "überflüssiges *s*" which Pietsch has in mind are doubtless those recorded by him in two footnotes of the Weimar edition (xiv, p. 237, and xv, p. 77); there are six in all, three of them being pleonastic repetitions B: ("wo es mirs fehlt;" "habens sies gelestert;" "es nichts ists;" the last two do not occur in the first editions and are probably corruptions)

while the other three ("er wirts sie" [wird sie]; "verkauft mirs sy"; "kann mans sie") are most likely due to attraction, though they may be pleonastic too (anticipation of the object *sie* in an apocopated enclitic form). Here again, there is not a single parallel to the passage in question; in fact, a pleonasm of the kind that Pietsch assumes is simply impossible: the simultaneous expression of one and the same logical relation ('thought of a thing') by both the genitive case and a prepositional phrase would be a syntactical monstrosity. If, then, as Pietsch admits, the enclitic *s* of "solls" is the genitive *es* dependent upon "danck," it follows that the word "dazu" cannot be anything but an adverbial modifier of the predicate, and as such it must mean "in addition thereto, besides, moreover." This conclusion disposes, at the same time, of the only argument which Pietsch advances against the common interpretation of the line in the hymn "und kein danck dazu haben;" he insists that if "dazu" meant "moreover," it would stand either at the beginning or at the end of the phrase, not in the middle. The fact is that the order of words to which he objects occurs not only in his own quotation, but as we shall see, elsewhere, too; in the particular locution under discussion, it seems to have been the rule. It is to be observed, moreover, that Pietsch is curiously inconsistent in this matter; he rejects the common interpretation on the ground that it presupposes an unusual order of words, but he does not hesitate to offer, in its stead, a theory that postulates two striking exceptions: a use of *danck* which is not found anywhere else in Luther's works, and a syntactical construction (*danck zu*) which is absolutely unheard of in German literature.

In dealing with the mass of evidence which favors the traditional view, Pietsch proceeds in a rather arbitrary fashion. Cochläus' version (1529) of the passage in the pamphlet: "ac ne gratiam quidem eo nomine ullam a me inibit," a strikingly careful rendering (*quidem* = "dazu," *enomine* = "es") by a man who was thoroughly familiar with Luther's style and diction, would seem to leave no room for doubt as to Luther's meaning; but Pietsch sweeps it aside with the remark that Coch-

läus' home was so far from Wittenberg (he was born near Nürnberg, had studied at Cologne, had then lived at Frankfurt and Mainz, and in 1529 was residing at Dresden) that he "could not be considered a reliable interpreter of an expression of Luther's which was evidently not widely used": in other words, he assumes that within a certain radius from Wittenberg the word *danck*, in the phrase under discussion, meant 'thought,' but that everywhere else in Germany it meant 'thanks'! It is interesting to recall, in this connection, the testimony of Dr. Zweylinger (*Nationalzeitung*, August 5, 1883), to the effect that in the Province of Saxony (where Wittenberg is situated) the locution in question is used to this day in the sense disputed by Pietsch: "Datô (dazu, dafür) saste (sollst du) keenen Dank hemm'n (haben)" = "Dafür werde ich dir nicht noch extra eine Lobrede halten." But of this fact Pietsch takes no notice.

It is needless to dwell on this subject. If further evidence is wanted as to the correctness of the traditional interpretation of the line in our hymn, it will be found in a parallel passage which Pietsch has overlooked,—strangely enough, for it is in the very pamphlet from which he derives the supposed corroboration of his theory. On page 11 (Erl. ed.) of that pamphlet, Luther contends that a charge of libel cannot be based upon a private letter, on the principle that "De occultis non judicat Ecclesia, multo minus judicat de eisdem Magistratus," and concludes by saying (p. 12), with reference to the "Hofeschränzen zu Dresen:" "Sie sollen mir heimliche Sachen ungericht lassen, und dess keinen Dank dazu haben." There cannot be any doubt as to either the syntactical structure or the meaning of this passage. "Dank" is unmistakably construed with the genitive, not with *zu*; "dazu" can only be an adverbial modifier in the sense of 'moreover,' and its position shows again the invalidity of Pietsch's objection on this score; and as "dess" refers to "ungericht lassen," "Dank" cannot possibly mean 'thought.'

Now all this must apply as well to the pas-

1 If Zweylinger's interpretation of *datô* is correct, it shows that this word, in taking the place, at the head of the sentence, of the disused genitive dependent upon *Dank*, has also, in a measure, assumed the function of this genitive.

sage quoted by Pietsch and to the disputed line in the hymn, for the three cases are in every respect analogous. The line in the hymn, to be sure, lacks the genitive *des* or *es*, but the reason is obvious: there was not room for another word, nor could an enclitic's be appended to "und;" and the genitive could be spared, as the sentence was clear enough without it. The objections to Heyne's view (*danck=Wille*) have been stated above; there remains, then, for our "danck" only its ordinary meaning, in whose favor Luther's usage establishes *a priori* the strongest kind of presumption, and which, moreover, makes excellent sense in all three passages: Luther declares that he will not even thank his enemies for complying with his demand, inasmuch as he is merely asserting rights and truths which they will have to recognize sooner or later, willingly or unwillingly (cf. Zweylinger and Maurer, ll. cc.). That is what the early translators of the hymn had in mind when they rendered our lines, freely but the more tersely and pointedly, by

"Verbum hoc adversarii nobis non eripient
Sed quantumvis invitati relinquunt" (Sleidanus, 1546)
"Purum sinant verbum Dei
Nolint velintve quique" (Ammon, 1579).
"Nobis furor verbum Dei
Noluit, veluit, relinquat" (Cremcovius).

The train of thought and the tone and spirit of our lines as thus interpreted are thoroughly characteristic of Luther. A perfect counterpart of them, furnishing in the explicitness of its wording a welcome commentary on the disputed line in the hymn and on its parallel passages, is to be found in the open letter *An die Herren deutschs Ordens* (1523). In this letter Luther contrasts the true chastity of matrimony with the false one of celibacy, and urges the knights of the Teutonic Order to marry, adding, with reference to the decrees of popes and ecclesiastical councils (Weimar ed. xii, p. 238):

"Und obs uns die Concilia und menschen hynfurt erleubten und zu liessen, so wollen wyr yhr urlaub nicht haben, und umb yhrs zulassens willen nichts widder thun noch lassen. Denn *ich will nicht gnug daran haben*, das Concilia odder kirche (wie sie es deuten) solchs zu lassen oder setzen, *Ich wils yhn auch keynen danck nicht wissen, noch sie drum*

grüssen, noch von yhn begeren. Sie sollens und müssens thun" . . .

And further, p. 239:

"Sie sollen zu schanden werden öffentlich, wie Paulus sagt 2. Timo. 2., *es geschehe williglich oder unwilliglich*, des und keyn anders, wenn yhr noch zehen mal so viel weren, und eyn iglicher so viel vermöcht, als sie itzt alle sampt vermügen."

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INACCURACIES IN EUGENIE GRANDET.

A FEW years ago it was noticed that increased attention was being given to Balzac in this country. At present the enthusiasm for the author is very marked. All evidences go to show that, in the words of a recent essayist, "Balzac is just now in the zenith of his fame in America." In France the centenary celebration held at Tours in May, 1899, and a new illustrated edition of his works, now in course of publication, are some of the indications of a willingness to acknowledge the novelist's supremacy in his own country. Recent French art, too, has been quick to reflect the same feeling.

In 1895, an American edition of *Eugénie Grandet* (ed. Bergeron) was published by Henry Holt & Co., and reviewed briefly in this journal.¹ This edition, though far from perfect, has done much to stimulate the study of Balzac in our college classrooms, and has called forth in the columns of this journal several communications in the way of comment and elucidation.² The object here is to discuss some additional points touching the text of Balzac's masterpiece. The inaccuracies to be noted are not all, in themselves, matters of vital importance; they are perhaps inseparable from the peculiar genius and bulky product of the author. But it is thought that they should be of immediate interest to teachers who include Balzac in their courses. The page references are to the Holt edition, and

1. Vol. xi, June, 1896, col. 380.

2. Vol. xii, June, 1897, col. 321; Vol. xiii, Mar. 1898, col. 191; Vol. xiii, May, 1898, col. 320; Vol. xiv, Feb. 1899, col. 128.